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An unofficial *Doctor Who* Publication

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**Come one, come all, to the Museum of *Doctor Who*!  
Located on the SS. Shawcraft and touring the Seven  
Systems, right now!**

Are you a fully-grown human adult? I would like to speak to someone in charge, so please direct me to any children in the vicinity.

No, no, that's not fair – I was programmed not to judge, for I am a simple advertisement bot, bringing you the best in junk mail. Are you always that short? No, don't look at me like that: my creators were from Ravan-Skala, where the people are six hundred ft tall; you have to talk to them in hot air balloons, and the tourist information centre is made of one of their hats.

But where was I?

Ah yes! Of course. Yes, it's festival time at the Museum of *Doctor Who*, the (second) Greatest Show in the Galaxy!

I have been instructed to manipulate the local space-time distillation vector to warp your tiny human brains and induce an hallucinatory state, enabling you to step inside the museum itself, and experience a small sample of all it has to offer.

No, please don't get up off the toilet to thank me.

Here we go then...

## 1. St John's Ambulance Sign.

The staff usher you past all the queues. Clearly someone has told them it's your birthday. Well it was back where you came from, but you're in another time zone now, so should you tell them you'll wait with all the others? You check out the queue. There's the Keeper of Traken. Ashildr. Dorian Gray. Captain Wrack. All tutting, looking at their watches, moaning about immortality being a curse.

Nah, let them think it's your birthday. In fairness, you did open presents this morning: a toy Yeti, a handmade scarf, a Dalek playsuit... And now you're here, the ultimate present – learning about that wanderer in all time and space known as the Doctor.

This first room is meant to be experienced alone. Fog hangs in the air. It's dark, gloomy. You can't see anything apart from exposed brickwork and a sign directing you forwards: Totter's Lane Yard, This Way. You go on cautiously. Where's the first exhibit? There's nothing at the end of the lane. Except...

A spotlight focuses on a blue square, suspended impossibly ahead, in the mist, a few metres away. The corridor feels more intimate as you get closer.

Right at its centre is a circular logo: the St John's Ambulance sign, as seen on the first TARDIS.

*Doctor Who* debuted on BBC1 on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1963 at 5:16pm. Though it only attracted a modest audience of 4.4 million viewers, the following week the BBC repeated this first episode, named *An Unearthly Child*, before the second (*The Cave of Skulls*) due to concerns its initial transmission had been overshadowed by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. It proved a canny move: around six million tuned in for the repeat and its second episode, and the four-part serial, which concluded on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1963, averaged six million viewers.

By the end of the second serial, better known as *The Daleks* (or *The Mutants* to some), *Doctor Who* had crossed the ten million viewers milestone.

But this success belied troubles behind the scenes.

Likely due to the difficulties of realising extreme locations and characters on limited budgets, sci-fi was relatively rare on TV: the first was an adaptation of a Karel Čapek play, *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)*, which also coined the term “robots”, and aired on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1938, followed by a live transmission of *The Time Machine*. Other sci-fi dramas included *Quatermass and the Pit*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and *Out of this World*, a 1962 spin-off of ITV's *Armchair Theatre*.

Nonetheless, a BBC Survey Group cautioned that “SF is not itself a wildly popular branch of fiction – nothing like, for example, detective and thriller fiction. It doesn't appeal much to women and largely finds its public in the technically minded younger groups. SF is a most fruitful and exciting area of exploration – but so far has not shown itself capable of supporting a large population.”

And yet *Out of This World* had debuted to some eleven million viewers. Sydney Newman had commissioned it when working at ITV and was adamant that sci-fi was the answer to a gap opened in the BBC's Saturday evening schedule between *Grandstand* and *Juke Box Jury*. Donald Baverstock, BBC1's controller of programmes, instructed Newman (who'd joined as head of drama in December 1962) to find a family-friendly programme to fill it.

He, in turn, told Donald Wilson, head of the script department, to work on a sci-fi format which could run throughout much of a year. Wilson, with his colleague C.E. Webber and two members of the Survey Group, Alice Frick and John Braydon, came up with a show about a group of intrepid scientists, featuring “The Handsome Young Man Hero”, “The Handsome Well-Dressed Heroine”, and “The Maturer Man” – which Newman subsequently denounced

as “corny”. Instead, he focused on “The Maturer Man” with a “Character Twist”, giving him an enigmatic name: the Doctor.

He approached very few to produce the then-unnamed show: Don Taylor, whose feathers had been ruffled by Newman’s restructuring of the drama department, and Shaun Sutton, whose experience in the BBC children’s department meant he could handle such an extensive production. (Sutton would eventually prove pivotal to *Doctor Who*, talking Newman into casting Patrick Troughton as the Second Doctor.) Both turned the position down.

Sydney then recalled a gutsy young production assistant who’d impressed him at ITV: Verity Lambert, who he put in charge of *Doctor Who*. On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 1963, she arrived at BBC Television Centre as its first female drama producer. Newman later described her appointment as “the best thing I ever did on *Doctor Who*”.

That same month, just five weeks before expected airdate, Assistant Controller (Planning) Television Joanna Spicer raised concerns that no one had been cast in any lead roles. Even more troubling was the lack of scripts! *Doctor Who*’s transmission was subsequently delayed a further eight weeks.

C.E. Webber’s *The Giants* was deemed unsuitable for the programme’s first serial, too, meaning Anthony Coburn’s *An Unearthly Child* would need rewriting to accommodate character and format introductions.

Worse still was the limited room at the allocated Lime Grove Studio D, as well as the old equipment it used. The TARDIS interior set would take up around half the studio space; in the other half, the production team would have to craft all of time and space.

The show’s success is testament to the incredible achievements and dedication of Lambert; directors Waris Hussein, Christopher Barry, and Richard Martin; associate producer Mervyn Pinfield; and script editor David Whitaker;

among many others.

Of course, Donald Baverstock had a vested interest in *Doctor Who* too; he was, after all, the person who approached Sydney Newman to develop a TV show for Saturday teatimes. Still, he kept a keen eye on finances. Each episode had a budget of £2,300, with a further £500 allocated to create the TARDIS interior, and when Baverstock rechecked the numbers, he became concerned that each episode of the first serial would cost over £4,000. He nixed the show, ordering the 13-episode commission down to just four. Fortunately, Lambert and Wilson convinced Baverstock that they could make *Doctor Who* more cost-effective.

Even its pilot episode, recorded a month before full filming for the rest of the serial began, ran into troubles. The practice of making pilot episodes didn't exist in the UK at that time, owing to cost and tight filming schedules.

There were dialogue mistakes. A camera ran into scenery at Totter's Lane. The Doctor was too bad-tempered and was described as being from the forty-ninth century. One of the biggest issues, however, was a technical fault resulting in the TARDIS doors opening and closing at random.

Newman instructed the team to remake the episode, meaning it would miss its expected 16<sup>th</sup> November 1963 transmission. This pilot wasn't aired publicly until 1991.

Famously, extensive news coverage of the assassination of John F. Kennedy held *Doctor Who* up too, though only by a few seconds, not the hours or days often quoted. After the disappointing viewing figures of this "delayed" broadcast, thankfully the BBC's considerable guile in replaying *An Unearthly Child* immediately before *The Cave of Skulls* secured the viewers it deserved.

You don't normally like to touch any exhibits, but this one actively encourages you to. You reach out a hand, palm stretching across the St John's Ambulance Sign. Somehow

it's humming. It's... It's alive.

*Vworp! Vworp!*

The materialisation noise to your left beckons you towards a door, through which lies the rest of the *Doctor Who* Museum.

## 2. Asteroid 3325.

From small beginnings...

You enter a vast chamber, surprisingly dark despite the spotlights focusing on the massive object at the room's heart. You strain your eyes, not quite believing what you're seeing. But there it is: an immense rock, suspended in this monumental space by deep gravity well generators in the walls, ceiling, floor – everywhere. And you can see why. You're struggling to comprehend the enormity of it. Your neck aches when you look up, trying to see how far it extends. But the edges are lost in shadow. You check one of the plaques, interspersed on the smooth metal floor, and learn that this minor planet is around eighteen miles in diameter. Visitors have started to disperse around the room, though there's a high concentration near you, near the entrance: that's because it would take some seven hours to walk from one end to the other.

This is 3325 TARDIS, a carbonaceous asteroid discovered in May 1984 by Brian Skiff at Lowell's Anderson Mesa Station, Arizona, and named after the Doctor's space-time ship.

*Doctor Who's* influence extends far beyond the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter that the 3325 TARDIS normally calls home. One of 3325's neighbours is Asteroid 8347 Lallaward, discovered in April 1987 by C. S. and E. M. Shoemaker.

Closer to home, *Doctor Who* permeates the televisual landscape: it's easy to lose track of how often a property on *Homes Under the Hammer* has been described as "TARDIS-like". Less obvious is the Lomax family in *Hollyoaks*, whose eclectic number include Peri, Leela, Rose, and Tegan! Writer Eddie Robson jokingly recalled on Twitter his attempt to give *Hollyoaks'* Leela the line "I will cut out your heart", echoing the threat made by the Fourth Doctor's companion in *Horror of Fang Rock*. "But the script editor told me it was

a bit OTT and I should take it out,” he noted. “Which was fair.”

Elsewhere, *Life on Mars*' (2006-07) protagonist, played by John Simm, was originally called Sam Williams, but production company Kudos requested an alternative. Writer Matthew Graham (*Fear Her*) asked his daughter for suggestions, and she came up with Sam Tyler – named after *Doctor Who*'s Tyler family. The US remake later changed the name of Sam's mum from Ruth to Rose.

The extinct marine trilobite *Gravicalymene bakeri* was discovered in 1997 in Gunns Plains, Tasmania, but was only found to be a different species from previous arthropods in 2020. Dr Patrick M. Smith and Dr Malte C. Ebach had been inspired by *Doctor Who* to pursue careers in science, so named their find after Tom Baker. “Will I be allowed to tack ‘Fossil’ on official correspondence?” joked Baker.

It's hard thinking about small-scale matters when you're staring at this floating colossus. You've spent a while in here now, but as you move to leave, you notice an interactive display, similarly suspended in nothingness. It's a 3D approximation of a sector of space, a paint-splatter of shifting blue and black with specks of stars glowing in the gloom. This forms a series of unofficial constellations, named in 2018 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Sol 3's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope. These include the Hulk constellation, the Eiffel Tower, Mount Fuji, the Little Prince, and yes, the TARDIS. The last is primarily made up of six pulsars and probable blazars (supermassive black holes with luminous accretion disks of incredibly hot gas), with baffling names like AP Librae and PKS 1622-29. It's mind-numbing to consider the immensity of the universe you're currently in.

### 3. Cyberman Head.

This head, described by the Ninth Doctor as “an old friend of mine. Well, enemy. The stuff of nightmares reduced to an exhibit”, is from Van Statten’s Museum, and was supposedly found in the London sewers, although it’s the wrong design to have hailed from *The Invasion* or *Attack of the Cybermen*.

The Ninth, War, and Eighth Doctors are the only Doctors not to have met the Cybermen on screen. Still, that doesn’t mean they appear anywhere near as often as the Daleks – in fact, apart from a brief cameo in *Carnival of Monsters*, the Cybermen were only in one serial throughout the 1970s. The Third Doctor didn’t technically face them either, but witnessed their swift execution in Gallifrey’s Death Zone in *The Five Doctors*.

The Second and Eleventh Doctors faced them most often, while the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Doctors only met them once each. Curiously, they appeared in every Twelfth Doctor finale, thanks to a cameo in *Hell Bent*.

But likely due to their frequent returns opposite Troughton, they were used less frequently from then on. Tom Baker, despite serving seven years in the role, only met the Cybermen once, in *Revenge of the Cybermen*.

It means lots of companions have never battled them on TV either. It’s actually quicker to list those who have: Polly, Ben, Jamie, Zoe, Sarah, Harry, Nyssa, Tegan, Adric, Peri, Ace, Rose, Mickey, Captain Jack (though in *Torchwood: Cyberwoman*), Amy, Rory, Clara, Bill, Nardole, Yaz, Graham, and Ryan. River has appeared in a story with the Cybermen (*The Pandorica Opens*), but doesn’t come face-to-face with one – unless we count a deleted scene in which she picks up the Cyber-head lurking around Stonehenge and demonstrates knowledge of them by recognising their ships. That means she’s met them elsewhere... as have several other companions.

That's because the above list doesn't include multimedia adventures; Liz met them in the audio, *Blue Tooth*, for instance, and Leela in *Return to Telos*.

#### 4. Fossils.

Oh look, dinosaurs! Massive slabs of sediment have been chiselled from larger bedrocks, protected from enquiring hands, busy tentacles, and exploratory sink plungers by thick glass. But they still look amazing. You feel like a kid again, marvelling at these giant beasts that roamed the earth over sixty-five million years ago.

You can see various creatures etched in the dark layers of stone. Rib cages erupt from spines, tooth-bearing mandibles scream in perpetual torture, and hollowed eye sockets gaze back at the wandering visitors. Crystal jigsaws tell tales of extinction.

And according to *Doctor Who*, it was all Adric's doing, saving the future and dooming the past by falling into the destiny trap.

Adric was the first major companion to die in *Doctor Who*.

*Earthsbock* found the young Alzarian trying to get the Doctor to take him seriously by threatening to leave the TARDIS. Though not really intending to go, Adric wanted to prove he could do what the Doctor couldn't: safely navigate E-Space, where he came from. The TARDIS lands in a tunnel system festooned with dinosaur fossils, which the Doctor, Tegan, and Nyssa explore while Adric carries out his calculations.

The tale twists away from these caves, relocating to a futuristic space freighter carrying copious Cybermen, but eventually finds its way back to the past, as the ship explodes and apparently wipes out the dinosaurs – not to mention Adric at the ship's helm.

The final part is the only episode to not include the theme tune over its credits, as a mark of this shocking cliffhanger, which demonstrated that the Doctor's travels had real consequences. Yet anyone gazing at the *Radio Times* billings for the next story, *Time-Flight*, would've thought his

death a ruse: Adric is listed, but turns out to be an hallucination.

(Interestingly, as the Doctor mulled over Earth's history amid its relics, Adric's actor, Matthew Waterhouse, pulled on similar ideas in the late 1990s, with an ultimately unpublished stab at a *Doctor Who* novel. It saw the Doctor and Adric wandering through a landscape composed of the Doctor's memories. In a couple of mornings, Waterhouse had written around six thousand words. "One picture I remember was a distant sandy mountain range in the shape of a dead Cyberman, like those hills which suggest a sleeping human being," he wrote in his autobiography, *Blue Box Boy*. "I do remember that it was very dark: as his memories were drawn from him, the Doctor began to die. What is anybody made up of but memory?")

Technically, Katarina is the first person classed as a companion to die on screen, but she was only in two stories. She joined in *The Myth Makers*, but was sucked out of an airlock in the following story. Adrienne Hill had previously auditioned for *The Crusade* (for Joanna, a role that coincidentally went to Sara Kingdom actress Jean Marsh) and was excited to play Katarina. "I had lunch with Maureen O'Brien and Peter Purves and they told me to expect the tight schedule and how to cope with Bill Hartnell," she recalled. "He was nice to me as I told him that this was my first television work and he took me under his wing to guide me. You really had to be on your toes with him, though, because he would often forget his lines and we couldn't re-shoot things. You had to be prepared to help him out of a situation. Of course, all I ever said was 'What's happening, Doctor?'"

This would be her undoing. As the handmaid to Cassandra, high priestess of Troy, Katarina came from around 1200BC, posing difficulties for writers. The gaps in her knowledge would've meant continually explaining the

Sara's death scene, too, was the first thing Marsh filmed for the serial. Though Kingdom's status as a companion is debatable because she was never intended to feature beyond the sole story, Marsh enjoyed the part and returned for several Big Finish audios. "I don't know how I ever did it because I spent most of the time laughing along with Bill Hartnell and Peter Purves," she said. "They used to send me off the set and say I could only come back when I'd calmed down, which I never did." The character was even popular enough to be revived by Nation for *The Dalek Outer Space Book* (1966), the final instalment of the 1960s Dalek-focused annuals.

Sara isn't the only companion whose death is caused by the Doctor: the often-forgotten Kamelion was put out of his misery by the Tissue Compression Eliminator in *Planet of Fire*, after being taken over by the Master. Kamelion actively begs for death, and the Doctor doesn't seem overly concerned after delivering it.

While talking about robot companions, let's not forget the destruction of K9 in *School Reunion*. This model carried over from *K9 and Company*, a gift left for Sarah. Fortunately, after sacrificing himself to stop the Krillitane, K9 was upgraded by the Doctor, and Mark IV went on to appear in *The Sarah Jane Adventures* and *The Stolen Earth/Journey's End*. So did K9 ever really die...?

Although the possibility of death is always mooted when it's announced a companion is to leave the show, very few actually have died, at least on a permanent basis. Take Captain Jack Harkness for instance: he first died in *The Parting of the Ways*, but was brought back by Rose, and has since died many, many times. Though if we believe he's actually the Face of Boe, he does finally give up the ghost in *Gridlock*.

Clara is the only companion to permanently die three times – firstly as Oswin, converted into a Dalek and obliterated as the Asylum was destroyed; then the Victorian

Clara, who fell from a cloud in *The Snowmen*; and finally as Clara herself, a victim of the Chronolock in *Face the Raven*.

But Amy and Rory surely take the crowns for Most On-Screen Companions Deaths. Rory died so frequently, he actually seemed accepting of the idea in *Night Terrors*. His propensity for dying became something of a joke. His demises include:

- Being dissolved by an Eknodine (*Amy's Choice*).
- Shot by Restac and erased from time (*Cold Blood*).
- Gunned down by Canton at Glen Canyon Dam (*Day of the Moon*).
- On the verge of drowning (*The Curse of the Black Spot*).
- Seemingly aged to death (*The Doctor's Wife*).
- Victim of the Weeping Angels, living out a life without Amy (*The Angels Take Manhattan*).

But don't underestimate Amy! Her deaths include:

- Crashing the campervan (*Amy's Choice*).
- Shot by Rory the Auton (*The Pandorica Opens*).
- Erased as time contracts, albeit as the young Amelia (*The Big Bang*).
- Similarly shot by Canton in the Valley of Gods (*Day of the Moon*).
- Melted when the Doctor's sonic screwdriver cuts off the signal to her Ganger (*The Almost People*).
- Wiped from the timeline on Apalapucia (*The Girl Who Waited*).

Both were also caught in an explosion when the TARDIS self-destructed in *Amy's Choice*; erased then "reset" in *The Big Bang*; and jumped off a roof and lived out full lives in the wrong time period in *The Angels Take Manhattan*. "I was absolutely moved. And I think that Steven did a wonderful

job of really marking their departure in a fantastic way,” Matt Smith said soon after their departure. “I miss Karen and Arthur. [We were] great friends and I think the Ponds came to absolutely define an era. But he’s great at endings, Steven. I mean, how wonderful that he plotted young Amelia [waiting on the case] in *The Eleventh Hour*. That shot, [Amelia] looking up – he’s so clever.”

*Twice Upon a Time* adds an interesting caveat that builds on a concept given lip-service in *Hide*: “To you, I haven’t been born yet, and to you I’ve been dead one hundred billion years,” Clara says to the Doctor in the latter tale. “But here we are, talking. So I am a ghost. To you, I’m a ghost. We’re all ghosts to you.”

Peter Capaldi’s swansong shows that Bill and Nardole also died – eventually. Their memories are captured by the Testimony, and, despite speculation that Susan would return for the episode, it’s pertinent that only the three companions relevant to the Twelfth Doctor are seen. Nonetheless, the implication is clear: everyone the Doctor has ever grown close to is dead and is represented by the Testimony.

Indeed, Moffat boasts the distinction of being the only person to oversee an era in which all the Doctor’s companions die. “I’m not even crazy about it when they did it with Adric. I don’t think that’s the story”, he told *DWM*. “I’m sorry, it’s a children’s programme. And explicitly, the companions are like Doctor Who’s children. Or his grandchildren. They’re in his care, and lovely old Doctor Who is opening the TARDIS doors and saying, ‘I will always look after you’. Get it right – that’s the story.” Accordingly, those companions at least enjoy full lives before their deaths; though that’s arguably true of all companions, it’s either mentioned or implied that Amy, Rory, River, Clara, Bill, and Nardole led expansive lives before their ends.

*Doctor Who* insists that death is inevitable, but what comes before it is most important.

## 5. The *Shadow*.

You've seen some amazing sights here, but this one takes your breath away. It's a ship. Not a spaceship; an actual Edwardian yacht. And it's not floating in the water: it's suspended in the grand chamber above you. Suspended by what? From what? It seems willpower alone is keeping it aloft. There's a majesty and an eerie stillness about it. The sails gently sway in a make-believe breeze. It is iridescent, serene.

This is from *Enlightenment*, a ship commanded by the Eternal, Captain Striker. The Eternals are mentioned numerous times in *Doctor Who*, including in *Army of Ghosts* and *Can You Hear Me?*, but the Fifth Doctor serial is their sole TV appearance.

To the Eternals, you are a mere Ephemeral, a flickering candle, a pawn, a curiosity waiting for direction.

Surprisingly, *Enlightenment* is the first serial written and directed by women (it's also Barbara Clegg's only story, although she submitted plans for stories that were never made). It was Fiona Cumming's penultimate credit for the show, her final being *Planet of Fire*; she'd directed *Castrovalva* and *Snakedance* before, and worked as an assistant floor manager and production assistant in the First and Second Doctors' eras. The next serial both written and directed by women was *The Witchfinders*, some thirty-five years later (Joy Wilkinson and Sallie Aprahamian, respectively).

So who is the most prolific director of each Doctor's era? We're looking per storyline here, not taking into account duration.

**First Doctor:** Douglas Camfield (twenty-one episodes, not including film inserts for *An Unearthly Child* and *Marco Polo*, for which he was technically credited as a production assistant). His total doesn't include *The Planet of Decision*, which was largely by Richard Martin, as there's some debate

over whether he directed Ian and Barbara's return to 1965. The sequence was filmed alongside the Camfield-helmed *Time Meddler*, and he was certainly present during the still photograph session.

**Second Doctor:** David Maloney (nineteen episodes, largely owing to *The War Games*).

**Third Doctor:** Michael E. Briant (twenty-two episodes). Barry Letts is also notable for producing and directing around nineteen episodes, sharing direction on *Inferno* with Douglas Camfield.

**Fourth Doctor:** David Maloney (twenty episodes). Many directors returned throughout this era, including Pennant Roberts (twelve, or eighteen if we include *Shada*); Christopher Barry (twelve); Michael Hayes (fourteen); Rodney Bennett (ten); and Douglas Camfield (ten).

**Fifth Doctor:** Fiona Cumming (sixteen episodes, closely followed by Ron Jones with fourteen).

**Sixth Doctor:** Peter Moffatt (seven episodes, spread over just two serials, *The Twin Dilemma* and *The Two Doctors*).

**Seventh Doctor:** Chris Clough (twelve episodes with McCoy).

**Eighth Doctor:** Geoffrey Sax.

**Ninth Doctor:** Joe Ahearne (five episodes, beginning with *Dalek* and ending with *The Parting of the Ways*).

**Tenth Doctor:** Graeme Harper (twelve episodes featuring Tennant's incarnation).

**Eleventh Doctor:** Toby Haynes and Nick Hurran (five episodes each). Haynes has the distinction of being the only director on twenty-first century *Doctor Who* to helm five consecutive episodes across two seasons. Hurran was in charge of the fiftieth anniversary story.

**Twelfth Doctor:** Rachel Talalay (seven episodes, consisting of every two-part series finale with Capaldi's Doctor plus his swansong).

**Thirteenth Doctor:** Jamie Childs and Jamie Magnus Stone (four episodes each). Childs also directed the short video announcing Whittaker as the Doctor.



## 6. Time Lord Court.

You're inexorably drawn to the next installation – not by tractor (or Tractator) beam but by its sheer scale. This massive structure is the Time Lord court, retroactively named Space Station Zenobia, a rusting circular tunnel looping around a dart-like centre. It's probably bigger on the inside too.

All its doors are sealed off and a sign warns that anyone attempting to go inside will be prosecuted. Word on the street has it that there's an entrance to the Matrix Database in there. You're tempted, but the prospect of being imprisoned in a Quantum Fold Chamber for eternity isn't too enticing.

The actual court model was six feet wide, designed by Mike Kelt (whose major contribution to the series was the TARDIS console which debuted in *The Five Doctors* and was used until *Survival*). *The Mysterious Planet's* opening sequence – in which the TARDIS was forcibly drawn into the court – was *Doctor Who's* first use of a motion-control camera. John Nathan-Turner justified its £8,000 cost by reusing it for establishing shots throughout *The Trial of a Time Lord*, and to immediately impress viewers tuning into the programme to find out what had changed during its hiatus.

Models had been handled by the BBC visual effects team since *The Faceless Ones*, during which the production crew reported issues with props made by Shawcraft Models. Founded by Bill Roberts, Shawcraft had been responsible for many impressive units from much of the First and Second Doctors' eras, the first of which was the gorgeous and influential city on Skaro. Shawcraft had also made four Daleks for their debut serial, as well as the TARDIS' Time-Space Visualiser, the Mechanoid City, the Macra, *The Rescue's* UK-201 spacecraft, and much more.

The most impressive thing about many of *Doctor Who's* models is the level of detail. In August 2016, the Model Unit

was employed to work on a sequence in *Thin Ice* that saw the Doctor, clad in a Regency diving suit, crash through the ice and sink to the bottom of the Thames. The main torso was moulded at 1/3 scale to Capaldi, from a mix of silicone, latex, polyfoam, and fibreglass.

Mike Tucker worked as a visual effects assistant on the show from 1985 until 1989, then returned as supervisor of the Model Unit in twenty-first century *Doctor Who*, working on stories for the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Doctors. “It was great to get a chance to work on *Thin Ice* – I was beginning to think that doing effects for a Twelfth Doctor episode was going to elude me!” Tucker said. “As with all of the effects sequences that we’ve done for *Doctor Who* over the years, it was a challenge, but I was really pleased with the way that our model shots cut in with the live action footage – it’s pretty seamless, which is always what you’re striving to achieve.”

Viewers didn’t get to see much inside the diving helmet, although Tucker had further employed Stephen Mansfield, who he’d worked with during the Seventh Doctor era (alongside Susan Moore), to create a sculpt of Capaldi’s face to fit inside the helmet. The sculpt was moulded in silicone and cast in polyurethane resin, before being painted and fitted to the puppet.

Mansfield had been partly responsible for a number of impressive sculptures from McCoy’s time on the show, notably the Destroyer (*Battlefield*), *The Curse of Fenric*’s Haemovores, and Kane’s melting face in *Dragonfire*.

The latter was inspired by a similar effect in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and featured a wax rendition of Edward Peel’s face on a fibreglass skull that was slowly heated up. Air bladders were used to manipulate the wax as it softened, with further hot wax added by tubes laced through the fibreglass insides. The footage was then sped up, producing a suitably grim yet awesome final effect.

## 7. Robot Cleaner.

This cleaner patrolled the halls of *Paradise Towers*, only occasionally strangling residents. It's a rather sturdy, imposing piece, its claw raised and dead black slitted eyes staring impassively back at you. But one detail deflates its threatening aura: the main hull and base should be a brilliant white, but this is charred, blackened, rusting, feeling sorry for itself.

It was damaged by a considerable fire at the Longleat exhibition on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1996. This blaze was attributed to faulty circuitry in K9's section. It's upsetting, thinking about what was lost in the flames or drowned by firefighters.

Charting a history of *Doctor Who* exhibitions is thrilling and frustrating in equal measure. They're always exciting for aficionados, providing a chance to glimpse behind the scenes. They're also typically lacking – either in organisation or in particular, less-favoured eras. Most start out small and are gradually added to, becoming, if not comprehensive, then certainly a fairer representation of *Doctor Who* as a whole by the time they're inevitably shut.

“I went to the Blackpool exhibition in 1981,” said long-term fan Jonathan Appleton. “The *Doctor Who* exhibitions had a kind of mystical status for someone who loved the programme at that time, as they were often mentioned by the announcer at the end of the programme [*‘Doctor Who will be back next week and you can visit the BBC’s Doctor Who exhibitions at Longleat and Blackpool...’*] and on *Blue Peter* but, not living particularly close to either, they felt out of reach and no more accessible than Disneyland or Hollywood.

“Anyway, my chance finally came with a family summer holiday in the Lake District that year, which we combined with a trip to Blackpool. My memories are a little hazy, but I do remember going downstairs to get in to it and it being *very* dark in there – almost too dark to see things properly.

There were various tableaux laid out with props and monsters – mainly from the most recent season, so for my visit that meant (I think) the likes of Marshmen and Traken. I'd been hoping for older monsters really as Season 18 hadn't been all that exciting for an eleven-year-old. I seem to remember they had the Fourth to Fifth I seem to remember they had the Fourth to Fifth Doctors' regeneration playing on a loop. The shop, probably for reasons of space, was set out more like an old fashioned railway station newspaper stall rather than a store you could wander round. I bought a postcard which had Tom Baker scrawling 'Welcome to Blackpool' on a wall like he'd been caught graffitiing which I still have to this day.

“Overall, the place seemed pretty small and we got through it in no time at all, which seemed a little strange after they'd been bigging it up on BBC1 for years.”

Jon Pertwee and Elisabeth Sladen opened the exhibition on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1974, just prior to the Third Doctor's swansong, *Planet of the Spiders*. It lasted until October 1985, when the lease on its building, 111 Central Promenade on Blackpool's Golden Mile, ran out.

It then reopened in 2004 to coincide with the series' revival, then shut again in November 2009.

This ran concurrently with Up Close in Cardiff's Red Dragon Centre, which opened as a semi-permanent exhibition at the end of 2005 and, before its closure in March 2011, was littered with monsters from the Ninth and Tenth Doctors' eras. The store still had a selection of merchandise from *Doctor Who's* past, including Target novelisations, Dapol figurines (which had enjoyed their own exhibition in Llangollen from 1994), and First Day Covers.

Various other exhibitions spread *Doctor Who's* reach, including the 1986-88 USA Tour; Land's End, Cornwall (2007-11); London's Museum of the Moving Images (in 1991-94, before moving to Bristol; then at Sheffield's MOMI in 2002); Earl's Court, London (2008-09); Coventry

Transport Museum (2009-10); and the *Doctor Who* Festival at London's ExCeL in November 2015.

The first permanent exhibition, however, was at Longleat, the wildlife conservation park in Wiltshire. It had opened in 1973 with a series of props from the show, held annual events in the summer, and ran until 2003.

There were two negative events that tainted this small exhibition, however. The first was the aforementioned 'Great Fire of Longleat'. The K9 wasn't screen-used, so its loss is arguably the least affecting of the fire's victims, which otherwise include the space station model from *Trial of a Time Lord*; the Nucleus of the Swarm (*The Invisible Enemy*); part of the TARDIS control room (though not its console, which suffered some smoke and heat damage, as did the vast majority of the displays); *The Visitation's* android; and 1980s Cybermen. Many were so badly damaged, it was suggested that they be completely junked. Fortunately, they were instead incorporated into the refit, and the Longleat exhibition reopened the following March.

The second negative event was the "Twenty Years of a Time Lord" event in April 1983, headlined by Jon Pertwee and Peter Davison, although you were lucky if you got anywhere near them or the props.

"Everything people say about this is true. The queues, the traffic, the sheer number of people crammed into the place," Appleton laughed. "We had got our tickets in advance but I vividly recall as we drove up there was this massive throng of people and cars, so it was clear from the off that they had hugely underestimated the numbers who would turn up. Thankfully there was a separate queue for ticket holders so we got in okay – my dad had the job of keeping me company and my mum and sister wandered off around the house and grounds (which may have been the better bet really!)."

Organisers were grossly unprepared for the estimated 40,000 fans who had turned up. "We joined the queue for

the autograph tent,” Jonathan went on. “I remember seeing Peter Davison being escorted in, dressed in his costume. They had soldiers there stewarding and putting out barriers and they had UNIT badges on their berets which was a nice touch. He gave a friendly ‘good morning!’ to everyone which seemed very Doctor-ish, and then we waited. And waited. For ages. The queue didn’t seem to be going down very fast. After a while, my Dad gently suggested this game wasn’t worth the candle and we wandered off. Peter was the only famous face we saw all day.

“I had my photo taken in the police box with a very limp-looking Davros on one side and an equally deflated Marshman on the other. I looked inside the box and there were just empty film packets on the floor rather than a console room.”

The day wasn’t a complete disaster, however. “The best bit was looking around the set displays which, though still crowded, you could get a good look at. I remember they had some from *The Five Doctors* which hadn’t been shown yet so that was very exciting,” Jonathan continued. “Funny how I can always remember what I bought. This time they had these brand-new prints by Andrew Skilleter (Omega and the Cybermen) which I thought looked wonderful, so I had to have those. Oh, and the latest *Doctor Who* and *Blake’s 7* Marvel magazines which I was really pleased about as they could be quite hard to get hold of.

“And that was about it really. There was a tent there where they were screening old episodes which would have been great but, no surprise, there was a huge queue to get in. An extraordinary day and in many ways a disappointing one, but at the same time I felt satisfied to have been there, to have been a part of it. There should be some sort of survivors’ association really – but they’d never find a venue big enough...”

## 8. Chalice.

Phew. You could do with a tippie. How fortuitous: a bronzed chalice with an enticing liquid inside. You reach out, then stop yourself, noticing that this isn't a catered event, and that this drink is, in fact, a very special one, concocted by the Sisterhood of Karn. Maybe you'll grab a milkshake from the café; it's got to be around here somewhere. Outside, they were advertising fish fingers and custard, kronkburgers, and Christopher Ecclescakes.

The Eighth Doctor enjoyed a wealth of stories in the *DWM* comics, largely spearheaded by Scott Gray. These adventures began with 1996's *Endgame*, in which the TARDIS landed in Stockbridge, a fictional village which the strip had frequented since *DWM*'s first comic, *Doctor Who and the Iron Legion*. There, he met his old friend Maxwell Edison, and, through him, was introduced to companion Izzy Sinclair. He further travelled with reformed Cyberman Kroton, and the reptilian-like alien, Destrii.

As an avid reader of *DWM*, Russell T Davies was happy to have the comic officially show the Eighth Doctor's regeneration – and that was the plan, until the BBC vetoed ideas for the Ninth Doctor strips to continue with Destrii. He was to travel exclusively with Rose in all mediums.

*The Flood*, the Eighth Doctor's last regular *DWM* appearance, ran from July 2004 to February 2005, and featured the Cybermen, beautifully redesigned by Martin Geraghty. It was planned that the Eighth Doctor would regenerate, having absorbed the Time Vortex, inadvertently foreshadowing *The Parting of the Ways*.

But Destrii had been a popular part of the magazine since her debut in *Ophidius* (2001), and it was felt that her leaving would've been hasty and unjust. Instead, *DWM* opted not to tell the story of the Eighth Doctor's last days. It meant Paul McGann was free to return in 2013's *The Night of the Doctor*, unexpectedly regenerating into a previously unknown

incarnation, played by John Hurt, while on Karn.

Most importantly, the Doctor and Destrii could continue travelling together in readers' imaginations. The final panel sees them walking off together, the Time Lord promising, "Anything could be over that hill, Destrii. Anything! C'mon – Let's go and find out..."

## 9. A Spoonhead.

Hmm, that's odd. The plaque says this is mobile server from *The Bells of St. John*, but it looks like a War Machine. No, wait, now it looks like an Emojibot. And now the Anne Droid from *Bad Wolf*.

“Active camouflage,” you realise, remembering the Series 7 episode.

This technology is a reflection of ourselves: the original spoonheads attempted to blend in, but this one is malfunctioning, perhaps due to its proximity to the space-time-warping black hole. It's reflecting the fears of visitors. You look around and wonder who's scared of *The Weakest Link*...

In true sci-fi fashion, *Doctor Who* frequently cautions that technology can be easily used against us.

The show's first exploration of current technology was also its first return to contemporary London since the first episode. *The War Machines* featured the Will Operating Thought ANalogue (WOTAN), at the heart of the Post Office Tower, the tallest building in the UK and a symbol of 1960s interconnectivity. WOTAN overpowered human minds using radio transmissions and instructed those nearby to construct War Machines, mobile computers to do its bidding. WOTAN was to be linked with military complexes worldwide to create a centralised computing system. The serial was broadcast in 1966, just two years after the completion of the Post Office Tower, a new spectre looming over London. The CDC 6600 was also unveiled in 1964, the world's first working supercomputer, capable of performing three million instructions a second. Its speed was partially due to its reliance on peripheral processing units, i.e. ten smaller computers; WOTAN's parallels were obvious to see. The CDC 6600 remained the world's fastest computer until 1969.

The idea of a core unit feeding on information collated by

tangential processors comes from a human neural network, based on Frank Rosenblatt's Perceptron algorithm in 1958. Described as the first machine capable of having an original idea, it paved the way for artificial intelligence (AI). "Stories about the creation of machines having human qualities have long been a fascinating province in the realm of science fiction," Rosenblatt acknowledged at the time. "Yet we are about to witness the birth of such a machine – a machine capable of perceiving, recognising, and identifying its surroundings without any human training or control."

*The War Machines* writer, Ian Black Stuart warned us of not only AI but also monopolisation of telecommunications. This continued to be a concern in *Doctor Who* as interconnectivity was a foothold for the Cybermen in *The Invasion* and *Rise of the Cybermen/The Age of Steel*, both involving International Electromatics, then for the Ice Warriors in *The Seeds of Death*, as the Martians exploited humanity's reliance on a transmat complex on the moon.

Technology was marching forward, regardless of how the public felt.

Computers were either the must-have gadget, something for companies to boast about having, or an unknowable entity: mysterious, unfeeling, ready to supplant us. Chiefly, some were concerned they were intended to take jobs and plunge the labour force into depression. The 1966 film, *Fear of Computer Automaton*, recognised this unease, noting that "the computer hums; data processing is on the way, seemingly in control of our very destinies, through its indecipherable code. We feel like actors on a stage, talking to machines because we can no longer talk to human beings". This is explored in *The Green Death*, a rallying call against massive industry affecting society and nature, with Global Chemicals ruled over by the mad Biomorphic Organisational Systems Supervisor (BOSS).

The serial further established computers' reliance on humans: BOSS is mentally linked to the company director

and is reprogrammed to consider illogical arguments.

Interestingly, while computers were often thought as forward-thinking, the concept of the Y2K bug baulked at the future. In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, computer engineers had used two-digit codes to denote a year. The Y2K glitch posited that the year 2000 would be interpreted as “00”, throwing programming out of sync if mistranslated as 1900. What sounds like a small issue could’ve had wider ramifications: safety checks at nuclear power plants, for instance, relied on a daily routine; credit card statements could add one hundred years of interest; and entire airline schedules would need revising. Millions were spent by governments and companies worldwide to combat the Millennium Bug – which now seems quaint and churlish.

*Doctor Who: The TV Movie* looked to this future too. Set on New Year’s Eve 1999, the Doctor raced to find an atomic clock and avert disaster for the twenty-first century.

The clock was based on an idea suggested by Lord Kelvin in 1879, and used electronic transition frequency in the electromagnetic spectrum of an atom to accurately measure time. The atomic clock was created by Harold Lyons and his team at the National Bureau of Standards in 1949, but it wasn’t until 2004 that a chip-sized version was made. Atomic clocks are now used for telecommunications, including the Internet Network Time Protocol and for GPS.

*The TV Movie* is a neat time capsule demonstrating the concern Y2K caused but also how quickly the public adapted to computing language.

The word “computerphobia” largely didn’t appear in publications until the 1980s, reaching a crescendo in 1986. *Personal Computing*’s Charles Rubin argued in 1983 that, “The most important thing to remember about computerphobia is that it’s a natural reaction to something unfamiliar.”

*Fear of Computer Automaton* dispensed with anxieties by explaining how automaton instead resulted in more jobs and training opportunities. “Even in space exploration, the most

sophisticated area of technology, it is people that run the show,” it went on. “Without their expertise, the machine could click all it wants to, but nothing would be accomplished. The human brain is not outdated.”

For *The Robots of Death*, people corrupting technology proved the issue, as Taren Capel, raised by robots, freed them from their programming. *Doctor Who* was exploring AI beyond computers themselves, namely the uncertainty we feel caused by the uncanny valley, which the show had previously featured in *The Android Invasion* (incidentally screened the same decade the term “uncanny valley” was coined).

But the Doctor was adept at conversing with machines. He even had one as a companion: K9, a loveable icon of the 1970s even if it wasn’t so agreeable off-screen. “The dog couldn’t move quickly in the old days,” Tom Baker recounted. “It was retrieved in rehearsal by John Leeson, actually playing the dog; he actually moved around. And I said, ‘Why don’t we give him another costume and get him to answer the phone or play chess or something?’ But by that time, of course, the BBC had calculated that they were marketing K9 and they didn’t want any discussion about that.”

Our fears over technology moved on, as we became more and more surrounded by it. The aforementioned Cybermen takeover of *The Age of Steel* was achieved by making different technologies compatible, humanity casually strolling to their deaths thanks to Bluetooth headsets. *The Sontaran Stratagem* involved atmospheric manipulation through the GPS system, ATMOS, cheerily picking off the scheme’s opponents with the adieu, “This is your final destination.” And the Eleventh Doctor warned that “we’re living in a wi-fi soup”, which the Great Intelligence uses to harvest human minds in *The Bells of St. John*.

Worries about wireless Internet are epitomised by the 2009/10 plan to turn Swindon into the UK’s first “wi-fi

town” using 1,400 radio boxes to create a ‘wi-fi mesh’, allowing secure online access across the town, with the possibility of signing up for unlimited access. It wasn’t an entirely new idea: Brighton planned to create a city-wide network, as did Manchester, but neither got off the ground. Norwich’s £1.35 million Open Link scheme launched in 2006, covering a 4km radius from City Hall, with expansion possibilities to rural areas to the south. Over two hundred aerials secured to lamp posts were used to create a wireless network, allowing about one thousand people to access the Internet – but the installation failed in 2008, when funding ran out. Swindon’s plan was similarly bogged down by allegations of unlawful proceedings.

While Swindon Borough Council pointed out that the scheme would mean doctors could carry out procedures, examinations, and consultations in remote areas, there were concerns over electromagnetic radiation (EMR), similar to those raised over the use of mobile phones and telecommunications masts. EMR has been blamed for a range of illnesses, from headaches and fatigue, to long-term behavioural problems and tumours. It was thought that up to 5% of the population suffered from electromagnetic sensitivity (EHS), and free, widely-available wi-fi could increase this.

Some places even banned the use of wi-fi. In 2008, the French National Library rejected installation of wi-fi, prompting other Parisian libraries to take similar stances; complaints from university staff suffering forgetfulness, headaches, and dizziness prompted education authorities in Sorbonne, Paris, to also postpone the use of wireless access.

Questions over the effects of EMR (and how much radiation wi-fi actually emits) remain, but are forgotten by the public. Many argued that there’s no evidence of EMR harming us and equate it to our largely-subsided worries about phones; *The Bells of St. John*, then, was an interesting attempt to discuss the symbiotic nature of technology.

The Intelligence's reach is limited by two things: humans clicking on the incorrect Internet access code; and its own rationing. It demonstrates that it can control anyone in close proximity to a base-station, but doesn't upload all minds to its own servers immediately: "The farmer tends his flock like a loving parent. The abattoir is not a contradiction. No one loves cattle more than Burger King."

This contrasts with *The Idiot's Lantern*, which took this same invasion method and transmuted it to a 1950s concern, television. The Intelligence's plan was seemingly more long-term than the Wire's, which involved feeding off the electrical energy of viewers' brains to regain a corporeal body.

Radiation was similarly a concern about TV: since the 1940s, it was feared tube leaks would affect anyone sitting too close to the set. The risk only became concrete in 1967 when General Electrics in America released a colour television which emitted x-rays in a downward crescent (sets on the floor had less impact than those mounted at eye-level or higher up), and further that other manufacturers could be implicated.

These worries were finally dismissed in 1969 by W. Roger Ney, executive director of the National Council on Radiation Protection, when two congressmen suggested that manufacturers should test fifteen million colour TVs. "I'd sure like to see that amount of effort put into things that are more clearly dangerous," Ney countered.

It's not solely the hardware that troubles people: what about the mind-destroying content that plays on TV? The medium faced the same opposition radio initially did. TV would, it was feared, turn people away from meaningful pursuits like reading and conversing. It would make people uncivilised. In some ways, TV has never shrugged off this misconception. Consider former-US President George Bush's 1992 call for families to be "a lot more like the Waltons and a lot less like the Simpsons" – even television

has a pecking order.

To some, reality television would sit at the bottom of the small-screen hierarchy (although *Doctor Who* ratings have frequently been threatened by the likes of *The X Factor* and *Britain's Got Talent*). *Vengeance on Varos* predicted our use of TV to watch and torment our peers and apparent betters. Varos' form of reality TV dehumanised politicians and prisoners, torturing or killing them depending on viewers' voting.

TV proves a symbiotic beast too: the more we feed it with our attention, the more it does to keep it. The initial O.J. Simpson 1994-95 trial – in which the former NFL player was accused of the murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ron Goldman – for example, is held up as an important part of TV history. Viewers tuned in to watch the live ninety-minute car chase as police pursued Simpson. Every major network interrupted scheduled programming to feature the chase, resulting in approximately 95 million viewers nationwide.

Due to the popularity of this grim event, stations reacted to viewers' interest by extensively covering the trial, giving the whole affair an uneasy voyeuristic quality.

*Vengeance on Varos* warns us that the media can manipulate.

*The Long Game* further instils the idea that “the right word in the right broadcast repeated often enough can destabilise an economy, invent an enemy, change a vote.”

This meant controlling citizens *en masse*, reaching an endpoint in *Bad Wolf*, where citizens of Earth are glued to their screens 24/7 and would forcibly sacrifice their lives for TV fame. But a decade later, *Doctor Who* viewers themselves were manipulated. *Sleep No More* was fashioned as a “found footage” episode detailing the takeover of La Verrier spacecraft by Sandmen; the story's conclusion, however, reveals that the signal that creates the Sandmen is transmitted through the episode itself.

## 10. Matchbox.

This matchbox is open and at an angle, so you can peep inside to see—

Ah. Grim. It's a tiny Agent O. The Master had used his Tissue Compression Eliminator on him in *Spyfall*, kickstarting a controversial Series 12, in which it's apparently revealed that the First Doctor wasn't technically the first anyway. *The Timeless Children* delved into the Matrix, where the Master showed the Doctor that her past was a lie.

To some, this accounted for the extra faces which popped up as previous incarnations of the Doctor in *The Brain of Morbius*. Indeed, that's what was originally intended. However, other fans excused these by saying they were Morbius' previous faces, meaning the Timeless Child was an extra wrinkle in an otherwise unironed shirt.

Many things in *Doctor Who* don't quite make sense. And that's without mentioning tie-in material, which either seeks to clear up confusions, muddies the water terribly, or both.

So how do fans try to ease the pain? What excuses do we make for continuity issues and plot holes that keep us awake at night?

The Doctor had fourteen consecutive male bodies; only the fifteenth is female. Contrary to his saying he could have two heads, he always looks humanoid. Might we argue that a new regenerative cycle affected the character's biology, hence a female body? And that the Doctor gets a human-like form because that's the one that's accepted on Earth, effectively the character's second home? Or that the Ninth Doctor was lying, because all Time Lords we've seen look humanoid, so that's the default for Gallifreyans?

Why is that the Doctor, out of all the Time Lords we've seen in post-regenerative states, is the only one to suffer confusion or drowsiness after swapping bodies? Maybe he ran away before learning how to control regeneration like his peers.

What really happened to Ace, whose story continued beyond screen, concluded in some mediums (her death in the *DWM* comic *Ground Zero*) and continues with its intrigues in others (*At Childhood's End*, Aldred's novel, for instance)? Are these parallel versions of the same character?

And perhaps most contentious of all: is the Doctor, as became a plot point in *The TV Movie*, “half-human on my mother's side”? Can you somehow argue that only the Eighth Doctor has a half-human lineage? We don't know how Gallifreyan families work...

The Doctor's age is emblematic of inconsistencies. We don't know how old the Time Lord is – in many ways, it's impossible to work out anyway. The Doctor lives in a time machine (and we don't know how the fourth dimension operates there), then visits times and places all over the universe, each with their own relative times. Gallifrey, too, exists in different pockets of time. It all really is relative. However, humans are fixated on annual markers, so he's described himself as around 450 (*The Tomb of the Cybermen*), 756 (countering Romana's claim he's 759 in *The Ribos Operation*), and 900-ish, from the Sixth Doctor era onwards.

His age became an important plot point in Series 6, which spanned 200 years for him, with versions at Lake Silencio aged 909 and 1103. He then spent some 900 years defending Trenzalore, making the Twelfth Doctor at least 2000. This incarnation spent around 4.5 billion years inside the Confession Dial in *Heaven Sent* (though he was rebooted every fortnight or so, meaning not all that time aged him), and 1000 years guarding Missy in Series 10.

Fortunately, *The Day of the Doctor* confirmed what we all suspected. The Eleventh Doctor replies, when asked about his age, “I lose track. 1200 and something, I think, unless I'm lying. I can't remember if I'm lying about my age; that's how old I am.”

Because sometimes, we don't even need to make excuses: they're made for us!

Take the Master for example. Sacha Dhawan's Master revels in burning Gallifrey and torturing the Doctor by teasing that they'd been lied to as children. The last time we saw this character, however, he was a woman who'd put her evil nature behind her. She was also dead.

It'd be naive to think that Missy's character development wouldn't be undone eventually: the character is too important and fascinating to be felled for good. Nonetheless, *Spyfall* seemed to come so soon after *The Doctor Falls* that it risked leaving a sour taste. If you need to justify Dhawan's incarnation, look no further than Big Finish's *Missy: Series 2*, its opening episode, *The Lumiat* by Lisa McMullin, clearing up seeming inconsistencies by drawing on what we know about Time Lords and their technology.

That's the thing about *Doctor Who*: there's a lot to navigate and you don't have to account for it all. Some weave together all these narratives into one coherent whole. That's fine. You can pick and choose too. Haven't read a book series? No matter. Favour twentieth century *Doctor Who*? Fair enough. Prefer *Star Wars* anyway? Okay, you've gone too far now, buddy.

Continuity is truth: it's not all things to all people.

Aha! You're back, are you? No, wait, that's your front: it's very hard to tell with humanoids.

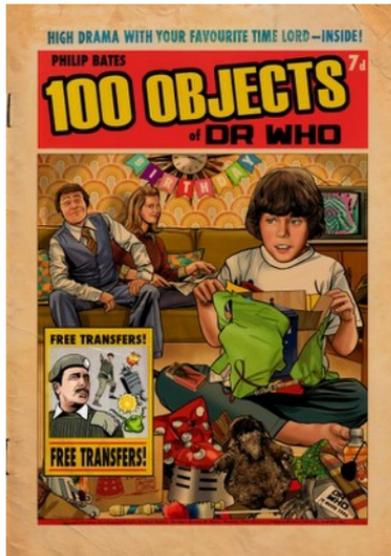
I'm afraid due to spatial co-ordinate transcription errors, I'm not entirely sure how long you've been gone, but laminators are now sentient, the ravens at the Tower of London have been replaced by walruses, and something called a Piers Morgan is prime minister. I'm sure that's fine anyway.

Your appetite has no doubt been sufficiently whetted, so head along to your nearest spaceport because the SS. Shawcraft awaits.

Oh, you're going dressed like that? Okay, well, I'll warn them you're on your way.

Now, please excuse me; I've not finished rifling through your bins yet.

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